Outlook

FW: Washington Post reporting on officer Flock usage

From Mike Richardson <MRichardson@cityofthomaston.com>
Date Mon 10/26/2026 3:53 PM
To Taylor White <twhite@cityofthomaston.com>

Email chain from Washington POST

From: Mike Richardson
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2026 3:35 PM
To: 'MacMillan, Douglas' <Douglas.MacMillan@washpost.com>
Subject: RE: Washington Post reporting on officer Flock usage

Mr. McMillan,

Thank you for your inquiry and for bringing this information to our attention.

As you may be aware, FLOCK Safety introduced its voluntary AI Audit tool in April 2026. Since implementing that feature, the Thomaston Police Department has conducted an internal audit of Flock LPR usage for 2026. Any searches identified by the system for administrative review were evaluated by command staff. Based on those reviews, we found no evidence that any flagged searches were conducted for unauthorized or improper purposes. The searches reviewed were determined to have legitimate law enforcement purposes consistent with departmental policy.

The information you referenced regarding activity from 2025 had not previously been brought to our attention. As a result of your inquiry, I have directed command staff to conduct an administrative review of the referenced search activity. Because that review is ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment further or speculate regarding its findings at this time.

As part of our continuing commitment to accountability, we have also implemented additional administrative safeguards. Officers are required to enter a case number or other authorized investigative justification for all Flock LPR searches. We are also reviewing and updating our agency's LPR policy to ensure it remains consistent with evolving Georgia State Certification standards and current best practices.

The Thomaston Police Department remains committed to ensuring these tools are used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes and in accordance with established oversight procedures.

Respectfully,

Michael Richardson
Chief of Police
Thomaston Police Department

1100 Barnesville St., Thomaston, GA 30286
mrichardson@cityofthomaston.com
Office: 706-647-5455

The contents of this e-mail message and any attachments from the Office of the Chief of the City of Thomaston Police Department are confidential and intended solely for the addressee. The information may also be legally privileged. This information is sent in trust, for the sole purpose of delivery to the intended recipient. If you have received this transmission in error, any use, reproduction or disseminations of this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender by reply email or phone and delete this message and its attachments, if any.

From: MacMillan, Douglas <Douglas.MacMillan@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2026 11:39 AM
To: Mike Richardson <MRichardson@cityofthomaston.com>
Subject: Washington Post reporting on officer Flock usage

You don't often get email from douglas.macmillan@washpost.com. Learn why this is important

Hello,

I'm a reporter at the Washington Post and part of a team of journalists exploring how police departments are using license plate readers including Flock. For a story we published earlier this month, we documented at least 50 officers who have been accused of misusing these tools for unauthorized purposes, including stalking the locations of their romantic partners. In many of the cases, these officers were terminated from their departments, and in some cases, they were charged with crimes. http://washingtonpost.com/technology/2026/08/02/how-police-officers-used-vast-network-cameras-spy-their-exes/

As you may know, information about every Flock search is logged, and those logs can be made available to the public via public records requests. Some data about the Flock usage of officers in your agency has been collected and published on the website Have I Been Flocked (https://haveibeenflocked.com/about/faq)

In reviewing the data on this site, we noticed:

- One of your officers, listed as A. Ham (possibly [redacted], searched a license plate as many as 128 times in 2025. According to publicly posted records, no other law enforcement officer has been recorded searching this plate. https://haveibeenflocked.com/surveillance/542ee594

We are in the early stages of looking into this. But because this usage pattern stands out as one of the highest number of searches on a single plate across all of the Flock log data posted on Have I Been Flocked, we wanted to alert you and see if it is something your agency has looked into. Do you regularly audit your officers' Flock usage? Is there anything concerning relating to these or other searches you have found? We would appreciate any information you can share. Thanks.